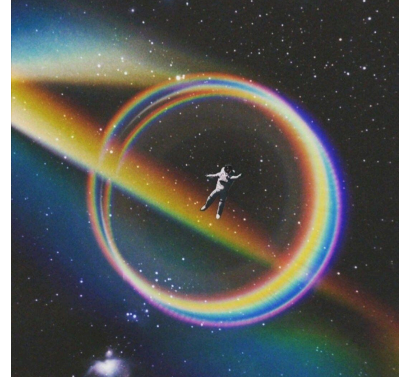
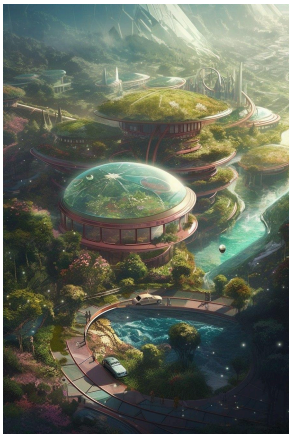


## The Park for Hopeless Romantics: An Exclusive, Ever Developing Guide



Note: This themed park is the product of emotions turned into visions. Happiness shines through an array of colors, love transforms into stars, and every other sensation turns into art. Some things may not make sense, some things may not seem to connect, but they will. You just have to let the narrative of the park slowly unravel. Each attraction is a romance story in its own way.

### CHAPTER 1- Bubble City:



The first half of an epic love story. A utopian hub exists within an expansive dome, its borders so faint, you feel that one touch will burst the entire shield. This metropolis is delicate, like a perfect mirage that will shatter from one needle prick. Waterfalls cascade off the sides of reflective towers and pour into canals that stream throughout the city. Flowers blossom to the height of the shorter buildings, and animals peacefully graze alongside passing residents. Bubble City is the perfect intersection between the future and the past, but it is too easy to lose track of the present when life flashes by on floating metros and boats that ride on clouds. You can't blink, or you may miss the chance to meet your true love.

### Attraction #1 The Bubble Metro: Flash of Fate

*A sudden jolt causes someone to fall perfectly into someone else's lap. We sit across from familiar faces we may have known in a different lifetime. We coexist silently, but red threads begin to glimmer as they meet their other end. The outside is just a garnish, an embellishment masking the answer inside. Have you really taken the metro if you haven't experienced *deja vu*?*

Some whisper that the metro is haunted with the ghosts of the past. Every time you enter the metro, you feel like you're meeting the same person over and over again, but each time, your worlds remain separate, unable to blend colors. Words buzz on the tip of your tongue, but they get swallowed up into an abyss before they're uttered.

These are simply rumors—you never know until you hop on.

Upon first glance, the metro appears untouched by magic. Crowds pour through the sliding doors and grip onto steel poles before they lurch forwards. Daylight streams through the dirty windows, which show the vast cityscape. We see our faint reflections blended with the metropolis. For a second, it appears as though we are about to enter just another vehicle that will weave through the most touristy spots of the park with a bubbly voice filtering through the intercom.

The moment we step foot into the metro, however, day morphs into night. Swirling auroras dance across the walls, and the ground begins to quiver enigmatically, as it transforms from a sturdy platform to a texture that's not entirely liquid, but not entirely solid, either. The ground feels soft and spongy, and our fingers slice through the now translucent walls. The entire metro glows with an iridescent sheen, like a bioluminescent jellyfish glimmering with intensifying shades that seamlessly transition from delicate pastels to electric magentas and blues. Undoubtedly, we are now inside a bubble. We drift seamlessly along the tracks, but stop momentarily in an ultramarine darkness as the track disappears beneath us.

Suddenly, we zip through a virtual hyperspace, and streaks of color flash across our faces. It's like we're in a nightclub that only has us two in it. A whispery melody fills our ears, carrying the essence of what's unseen and intangible. We hear the faint echo of a bell and hushed murmurs of voices that don't speak our language. We're in unfamiliar territory—you are the only one I recognize. For now.

The soft pastels of the summer sky have been wiped away with bold, fiery shades. The sunlit hub filtered through the windows becomes a cyberpunk city, where stretches of colossal buildings glitch with neon greens, and holographic whales swim in the sky. In fact, the entire sky has become an ocean holding cosmic sea creatures that soon explode into stardust and form constellations. Somewhere in the city's depths, a demon

whose skin absorbs light leaves behind a trail of illuminated footsteps—a nightmare in the making, but a monster too far to fear right now. Still, we find ourselves reaching for each other’s hands, as if we need to steady ourselves from falling and slipping through the protection of the bubble metro, letting the hub swallow us whole.

We watch the city unfold. Skyscrapers spiral out of the ground, blossoming right in front of our eyes. Any blank space is filled with a building outlined with unimaginable shades. Glowing street arrows point in all different directions—we find ourselves automatically leaning to one side or the other, as if we’re in a real life Temple Run game, until we reach a sign with refreshing cyan letters displayed upon a black background that reads, “The Grand Finale. Turn towards love.”

We face each other and a singular red laser beam pierces through the window and punctures through our chests. Amidst swirling hues and indistinguishable shapes, this thread of light is the only thing we can clearly see. It binds us together and buzzes with effervescent energy the closer we get to each other. Your chest radiates a warm red hue, and the color expands until it takes over your entire body. The city outside appears to respond to the laser—the hotter it hums, the brighter the city lights become—the more the night consumes us.

It’s as if we’re meeting for the first time. My once vivid memories of you have gotten lost along the trek through space. Now, you appear only familiar, like a stranger who has appeared more than once in my dreams. We’re caught in a limb of déjà vu—we swear we’ve been here before, in this place distant from any reality we’ve ever known. How did we get here, riding in a bubble misty from aurora lights and overlooking a futuristic mosaic weaving together dreams and nightmares? Two people crossing on an unlikely path, punctuated by a red ray of light- the red string of fate. We once wandered the city streets, relying on its hustle and bustle to blend in, not realizing that we were walking alone towards each other—our predestined destination.

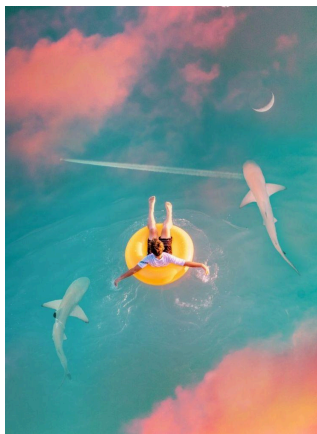
Perhaps the purpose of this metro was communicated unclearly—there are plenty of opportunities to take a tour through The Park for Hopeless Romantics and get the inside scoop on its secret lore. This metro ride, however, is a different kind of tour- one only we can define ourselves. Rather than a tour, this ride is a realization—within this boundless expanse, we managed to find each other. No matter if we search the past, the present, or the future, we’ll always reach for each other’s hand as our tour guide.

Without us realizing, the ground has reformed underneath our feet, and solid walls replace the wispy rainbow veils. The metro doors open and the next round of

couples clamber on, shoving each other to get the best spot by the window, not knowing that the entire metro will soon become one.

We return to the constructed playspace, where children eat their melting ice cream cones and older adults are left with everyone else's bags as they wait for them to finish riding the different roller coasters. We are most definitely in a themed park once again, but for a moment, we weren't. For a fragment of time, it was just you and I, floating amidst an endless metropolis in a bubble, looking for something we already found. The red thread of light has been erased with the night, but it manifests itself into everything that connects us—our memories, our tears, and our stories have always had a tinge of red in them.

*A highway emerges out of Bubble City and enters a tunnel that simulates a night sky, glistening with blue stars. You follow a wispy purple trail that runs along the road and beckons us forward. It's difficult to keep walking—you want to stand still and watch the stars spiral together into seashells of the cosmos, but you know an even better destination awaits. The road weaves towards a perfectly circular entryway that opens into a paradise where aquamarine waves kiss the white sands. The entryway is partially blocked by rays of sunshine and star-speckled clouds, but you can still hear the melodies of sirens and the lullabies of the whispering waters. As you near the portal, you feel the seaspray brush over your face. Gone is the restless city and the neon billboards—you enter a new state of tranquility.*



**CHAPTER 2- Sky Meets Sea:** The second stop in The Park for Hopeless Romantics. Sands as soft as clouds absorb our footprints. Windswept hair decorates sunkissed faces, as elements of the sky and the sea intertwine to make the air smell like the ocean and the water pass through your fingers like a light breeze. Wherever you step, you have this feeling that the two blue bodies are smiling at you. The beach feels endless but intimate, as if this paradise has been curated just for you. Upon closer inspection, you notice brushstrokes in the sky and the subtle pink swipes of paint that sprinkle throughout. Ever so

slightly, the sky moves like silk, and the colors are ever-changing. The water is liquid glass, mirroring the clouds and reflecting the white glow of the moon. If you turn your head upside down, everything stays exactly the same, untouched by the rest of the world.

### **Attraction #1:**

#### **The Chest of Lost Things**

*A weathered capsule rises from its ocean slumber, as old memories resurface with a haunting melody that feels out of place in a paradise so colorful. This is your one chance to reclaim everything you've ever lost. Unsent letters are in fresh envelopes again, your favorite polka dot sock, the key to the top drawer of your childhood nightstand, a hand sanitizer bottle you accidentally dropped into a lake...the chest goes deeper than you can imagine. You can find forgotten wishes, take possession of them, but be wary of losing the most important thing...*

Visitors gather at a cove, sheltered away from the rest of the sandy stretch, where other park guests are enjoying the afternoon sunshine. Shimmering water glides smoothly over rocks and pebbles, and the sun smiles overhead. We begin to hear a faint, almost inaudible humming that grows louder with each crawling wave. A brown vessel swims towards us, bobbing along the current until it perfectly rests on the border between sand and sea. It's large enough to fit a person, maybe even two. It's perfectly rectangular, with crisp edges that starkly contrast its peeling wood. A golden key is perfectly inserted into the hole, and it starts to twist on its own...

"Take what you desire," a buttery voice from an unknown source says. "The capsule is yours to reclaim."

Slowly, the lid begins to open, revealing a ballerina in pastel pink twirling slowly clockwise—a giant music box. Sweet piano keys and reminiscent harps blend into a melody that transcends our memory but feels nostalgic at the same time. The flooding scent of a dusty basement washes away the aroma of sunscreen and coconut. A tattered red carpet rolls out of the box, inviting us into its abode. We walk along the runway until we reach the platform and climb down a ladder that lets us into the box. The ballerina continues spinning on its pedestal above us. We jump down and land in an expansive room that appears far more spacious than the exterior entailed. The floor is slick and marbled. A skyhigh stack of shelves run along the entire wall and hold rows upon rows of isolated artifacts.

The lid closes, and we're trapped in pitch darkness, but not long enough to feel scared. Something gold glows to life, buzzing with uncontrollable energy and beckoning us to approach it. The show has begun. One of the objects on the shelves is responsible for the light. Upon first glance, it looks like a tiny moon suspended in space. Upon closer inspection however, we find that it's a coin that was swallowed up by the couch in your old house. The quarter squirms restlessly on its spot on the shelf, making itself fall off and topple onto the cold, smooth ground. It spins on its edge—naturally, we guess whether it'll land on heads or tails. I guess tails, you guess heads. Heads.

On cue, the shelf above comes to life, as wisps of golden pixie dust waft through the relics. We begin to hear the sound of ticking—on the corner of the shelf, white sand begins to trickle down in an hourglass. We see the crumpled pages of our forgotten ideas, the blurry photographs we left to collect dust in the storage room, and the letters we've always wanted to send each other but never had the courage to. Words emerge out of books with coffee-stained pages, rewriting themselves in the air in golden cursive. Before our eyes, erased stories patch themselves back together, and we find ourselves in the center of a revival. Here's the chance to right our wrongs, to get a do-over for all of our mistakes.

The ticket to the late night comedy show we went to together floats down on a long, silver thread. It waves temptingly in the air, as if it almost forgives me for losing it. Before I can grab it, more objects fly in and out, some falling out of wooden boxes, some appearing out of thin air, and some mysteriously populating our empty pockets. Dissonant piano chords play, and a cacophony of instruments create an unsettlingly chaotic rhapsody. We're flooded with everything we've ever lost—ironically, we start losing ourselves in an endless memory lane, caught up in the tides of the past and unable to push past the regret of losing what could've been. The fabric of the red skirt I misplaced years ago slips through my fingers, never to be grasped again.

Abruptly, the music stops. The hourglass pauses. Things suspended in midair fall to the floor. Their clangs echo through space. The ceiling opens itself to reveal a dazzling chandelier that looks like it was pulled straight from a fairy tale. Some of the shelves move forward to stagger themselves with the other shelves, ultimately transforming into a spiraling staircase that ascends towards the top of the chest. A sweet violin entrances us in a new melody.

We waltz through the empty ballroom, feeling remnants of regret wash away into the ocean that exists outside. We twirl around the objects that scatter the ground and keep our eyes trained on each other. We only see the present. Gentle sunrays pour

through the cracks of the chest and softly sprinkle your hair with specks of light. Perhaps this one moment is worth more than everything we've ever lost. There's no need to rewind the clock or flip the hourglass when we're dancing together. Time freezes—seconds hang in the air like fractals. Every mistake I've ever made became the red carpet that led me to this moment with you. Here we are, gliding to a soft song in a chest floating in a sea that reflects the stars. What would we need to fix?

The lid begins to open, and the pure blue sky dotted with puffs of clouds reemerges. We emerge from the Chest of Lost Things empty handed. The ballerina's voice gently welcomes us back into reality. We notice that its painted lips never move.

"We hope you found everything you were looking for," it cooed. "Otherwise, what was the point?"

### **NEW ADDITION: Attraction #2: Winter's Early Arrival- An Unlikely Ice Rink**

**This is a special addition to The Park for Hopeless Romantics, as it celebrates the one year anniversary of the love that started it all. Come to its grand opening on October 7, 2023 to walk down snowy streets or sink your feet in the sand. Love is in the air, whether this air feels like a cold slap to your face or a warm kiss on your cheek. This is a one-day event, so you do not want to miss out.**

*Embrace the unpredictable. Seasons blend to create new illusions. The water freezes over, glazing over the vibrant coral reefs and shielding the sea life underneath. We're standing on an aquarium, gliding over delicately to watch the underwater realm from above as if we're looking down from the clouds. Pools of endless adventure exist below, and we can't fathom their depths. Snow begins to fall...a wintry wonderland coats the summery paradise.*

As we're about to step out of the Chest of Lost Things, we see that we're completely surrounded by the sea. The sandy cove has disappeared from sight, and we are enchanted by the infinite stretch of glassy water, which is so clear that only the gentle ripples distinguish it from the marine life below.

Schools of colorful fish sprint below the surface—a prismatic flurry of vivid shades blowing past the wavering sea grass. Dolphins with shimmering tails swim majestically, and stingrays with turquoise skin coated with magenta swirls soar underwater. We reach down to feel our fingers graze the surface but surprisingly come into contact with a smooth layer of ice. We press our palms against it—the cold spreads

through our veins and snaps us out of our whimsical daze. Cautiously, we step onto the ice and slightly wobble before grasping onto each other's arms. Our breath turns into smoke—delicate wisps that smell like hot chocolate. We've never felt more alive.

The sun shines brilliantly overhead but has no effect on the thick sheet of ice. Beneath its subtle, frosty sheen, the ice provides a high definition glimpse into the world below our feet. We watch how the ocean comes to life with the sound of our footsteps.

We glide effortlessly atop the sea, as if we've been skating for our entire lives. I feel something light land in my hair. We look up and see a shower of cascading snowflakes, as if they're shavings from the softest cloud. They coat our fingertips and tickle our skin. Warmth still caresses our backs, but the chill begins to expand from our chest and to our toes. The euphoric rush of watching our first snowfall together makes the frozen sea sparkle like a rare diamond. Despite the brisk air, we see teal flowers blooming atop grassy hills in the distance.

Starry fireflies dance around us and speckle the ice with their glow. For each day we've spent together, the constellation adds another firefly. Soon, we can no longer distinguish between the tumbling snow and twinkling dots. It's as if we're enveloped in a snowglobe and someone shook it a little too hard. We continue gliding, even when our path is obscured by flurries. We don't know where our next destination is, or when the voice from the intercom will pierce through the enchantment, but we travel past the seasons until they become a blur of color and magic.

The seasons are but a spectrum; we skate through summers and winters in the pursuit of love. Months flash in double speed, as if we've gone through an entire cycle in a day. Perhaps *this* is the fastest roller coaster imaginable. Highs and lows blend into one exhilarating ride. Colors morph and intertwine pinkies to paint an aurora borealis in the sky. Our theme park adventure can be filled with piña coladas blended from the tropics, or it can be spent nestled in a cozy cafe with our hands wrapped around a hot mug. Either way, our time in the park will flash by, and we'll leave feeling like we've just woken up from a dream, with the aftertaste of citrus-flavored snowflakes and icy sunrays.

While the Chest of Lost Things reminded us of all the things that could have been, this ice rink shows us what things could be. The seasons will follow us as we swim alongside rainbows of fish, and they'll follow us as we soar towards palaces in the sky. We have the power to make winter arrive early or make summer last forever. Whether the world is blanketed in sheets of white or colored in the most vivacious hues, we'll be

there to soak it all in and sunbathe until the first snowflakes trickle down. I'll be there with you to watch winter wake up from its slumber, but I'll never stop being the rose on the hill.

Together, we will navigate through scorching summers until we reach the sky that meets the sea, where we can bathe in water that flows like silk. We will break through the bleak winter nights until we're wrapped up in a wool blanket by a crackling fireplace.

A year feels like a second. Let's enjoy each season while it lasts.

*As we look behind us, we see that the ice has receded into the water. The only solid sheet is the ice below our feet and the stretch of ice ahead. There's no turning back, even if we wanted to. We're off to the next ride in the park. I wonder where that will be.*

**After 2023, the ice rink will be open annually from October 7-10. Three days is more than enough time to skate through each season a million times.**

**FINAL CHAPTER- Wonder-Land:** Wonder-Land is the first park built at The Park for Hopeless Romantics, but it's the destination of the future. Populated with rather abstract attractions that rely on visuals more than concrete dialogue, Wonder-Land speaks to the romantic imagination. You can try to provide an explanation for everything, or you can just let it be magical. Here, love seeps into every nook and cranny. It's not always right in front of you—sometimes, you need to look up towards the stars to navigate your way through this endless ocean. This is the future of your dreams, inspired by your fondest, or most heartbreaking, memories.



### **Attraction #1**

#### **Dreamscape: Wanderlust**

*An evening picnic where the only food we need is the buffet of endless magic. From star showers to a sea made out of galaxies, this is your one-way ticket to a cosmos specifically designed for love. How can each second feel like a blink of an eye while lasting an entire lifetime?*

Visitors enter a dome that envelopes them in a comforting darkness—the air is refreshing with a light scent of cinnamon. It could also be a warm vanilla. Auroras swirl upon the walls and aquamarine wisps swirl around our heads and appear to pass

through our arms. A singular wisp wraps itself around our wrists, as if binding us together with magic. Entrancing instrumentals play softly from a distant place, like a gentle whisper that piques our curiosity of the wonders to come. As we walk along, we enter a spacious hallway, where love letters illuminate the walls with neon blue words that contain memories and secrets. Although these letters seem to come from anonymous characters, we feel intimately connected to their love story by the time we reach the ride. We notice that the ground is actually a screen that creates the illusion of water. With every footstep, however, we create a footprint made out of pink rose petals.

When we reach the end of the line, we see white pods with checkered picnic blankets strapped to the top. Passengers are instructed to sit atop the blanket and are strapped in by a seatbelt that goes around their waists. Their arms are free to point, to make hearts with their loved ones, or to take mental photos with their fingers as a picture frame.

We buckle ourselves in, and the ride gradually takes us into a space that's completely black. The music becomes a distant recollection, and the love letters vanish. Suddenly, there's a slight glimmer. It's so faint, we think we're imagining it at first. Then, we see another flicker of purple light, then another, and then another. We try to follow each speck until the entire sky explodes with cascading stars, as if fireworks made out of stardust are falling right in front of us. New colors begin to emerge—the deep purple melts into a neon fuchsia, which then transforms into a pure red. That's when the stars morph themselves into hearts. When they hit the ground, they blossom into digital orchids, and a cherry blossom tree swivels into the air.

The pods start to incline, and it's as if we are about to make direct contact with the falling hearts. The night sky begins to split open, like a zipper unleashing a brand new world. Our breath gets caught in our throats. We are now floating in a different sky, one where the sun has not quite set. It bleeds a deep pink and blends with shades of orange. Indigo tinges the cotton candy clouds. We are overlooking the most vast cityscape imaginable—a panorama of towering wonders and structures that reflect the kaleidoscope of urban nightlife. Through illuminated windows, we can see silhouettes of a couple dancing in the kitchen, another couple sitting atop the rooftop of a skyscraper, and someone handing flowers to their partner. Perhaps one of those couples wrote the love letters we saw on the walls.

Besides those defined figures, the rest of the city bustles with blurry lives and undiscovered stories. We are in a citadel blooming with romance and hope. The yellow glow from the windows turns into a deeper red, but the yellow shades don't leave us.

Instead, they dot the sky in the form of thousands of lanterns. Without us noticing, the sun has completely set and the sky is a navy blue once more. Of course, the lanterns are magic. They fold themselves into origami cranes that glimmer like fireflies and form a giant heart over us. A whimsical symphony begins to play from what we imagine to be an orchestra from below us.

Finally, we swoop down, as if a magic carpet is gently taking us towards the ground. The symphony shrinks into silence. However, we never hit land. Instead, we plunge into another night that feels infinite but lasts a moment. Expectedly, our world bursts into color once more—only this time, we are below the surface. Aquatic creatures light up the waters, as they slowly drift into view. Dolphins soar above while beluga whales twirl in the air and crash land into the darkness. We can see each detail, from their illuminated fins to the intricate designs that swirl upon their skin. Clusters of clouds and stars float along the stream as well, sometimes obscuring an iridescent fish that soon emerges from the fog. The water doesn't seem quite like water—rather, it's like an endless wave of light that isn't so different from the wisps that tied us together. We're moving horizontally, parallel to the stream's flux. We become hypnotized by the brilliant hues of this otherworldly aquarium.

Soon enough, the water dissipates into pixie dust and we move forward. A yellow speck expands into an engulfing sphere of soft light. We are in a small room illuminated by a sunset lamp, and it is furnished with two white desks, each topped with a sheet of paper and a singular orchid in a glass vase. A door stands at the end. A sweet voice comes through the speakers.

“Please unbuckle and exit the pod.”

When we hop off the ride, the journey doesn't end quite yet. The door swings open, and a woman enters, dressed in a gown that has a soft indigo to sky blue gradient and is dotted with stars. Her hair is arranged into a loose bun, as stray curls fall to the side. She holds two envelopes and two ink pens.

“Hello, I hope you enjoyed the Dreamscape,” she says. “But there's one more thing for you to experience. Here is your opportunity to write a love story, whether that's a letter to each other, an homage to your time together, a poem, or whatever you think best conveys your love. These desks are for you to write on. Take as long as you need. Write as little or as much as you want. The outside world can wait.” She gestures to a mailbox that's tucked in the corner of the room.

“When you're finished, seal the envelopes and place them in the mailbox. Then, your time in the Dreamscape may be over, but its magic will carry on with you forever.

Thank you for entering. And thank you for leaving your story.” She turns to exit the room, then adds,

“Oh, and the flowers are for you to keep. After all, this wasn’t *just* a dream.” She shuts the door behind her, leaving us alone with our thoughts.

We let the words pour out onto the paper. The ink moves faster than our minds, and we feel both exhilarated and exhausted from what we’ve just witnessed. We try to capture the capsules of magic we’ve unlocked, but there are no words that can describe our experience. We are only given one page, so we conclude with an incomplete story. We seal them away and put them inside the mailbox. A bell chimes, like one of those jingles that welcome you when you enter a bakery. We exit into the rest of the park, as if we just woke up from a vivid dream. Our day carries on.

What are these letters for, you may ask? Well, the love notes on the walls can’t just write themselves. Maybe the others in line will be inspired by our words for each other.

### **Attraction #2:**

#### **The Infinity Cafe: Suspended Between Dreaming and Reality**

*In a sliver between consciousness and slumber, there’s an infinity cafe. To put more simply, there’s an opportunity to meet again. Familiar faces you can’t put a name to pass by, and conversations you vaguely remember having fill the rooms. You can’t quite grasp it all, but a sip of hot chocolate may be just the trick to remind you why you’re here in the first place.*

Another bell jingles. The scent of buttercream wafts from the distance, like a rope gently pulling us towards something. There’s no one to greet us. In fact, the cafe is entirely empty. At first, it appears cozy and intimate, with its dim lighting and a dark turquoise sofa draped with a fuzzy white blanket. The walls are a slightly greener shade with splatters of glittering gold mimicking an abstract marbled effect. A darkwood table topped with a vase contains two lotus flowers that are ever so faintly pink.

Then, we notice the room never actually ends. It continues to stretch down as far as our eyes can see. As we stroll down the corridor hand in hand, we discover the cafe is made up of countless rooms, each themed a different color. Rooms glowing a deep red, a honey yellow, an aquatic blue, and just about every other color flicker on. Just like ours, each room contains a singular sofa with a table and a vase with specific flowers. Almost as if they’re scripted, yet still exuding spontaneity and genuinity, couples populate each sofa and whisper softly among themselves. We can’t hear them, except

for a stray chuckle that escapes through the windows, but enough is communicated through their starry gazes and dazzling smiles. Half-eaten cookies rest on porcelain plates while delicate wisps of smoke emerge from warm lattes.

We get lost watching the vignettes of different love stories—we almost forget the reason why we came in the first place...

*It was starting to drizzle outside. Storm clouds were rolling in, becoming a looming overcast that shrouded The Park for Hopeless Romantics in a wary darkness. They warned us to stay indoors and foreshadowed inevitable heartbreaks and bruises along the way. We escaped into this quaint cafe before lightning struck. All we wanted was a cup of coffee. Then, we would wait out the rain while taking small sips to mindlessly occupy ourselves longer. Perhaps we would order one of the freshly-baked pastries that magically pop out of the oven.*

However, the romantic fragments that are nestled within the cafe's walls tell a different story. The couples inside the infinite rooms are lost in each other's eyes, as they cuddle underneath the cloud-like blanket and tell stories that could stretch into the night. They laugh until their stomachs ache with happiness. No one seemed to care that the rain had already stopped. We continue to watch the different couples—they appear to move in slow motion, like they're part of a dream that we're watching from the outside.

Luckily, dreams are not fantasies. The vignettes disappear as we return to our own table—our own dream. A batch of freshly baked chocolate chip and snickerdoodle cookies awaits us. The edges are slightly crispy, but the center melts into our mouths. And no, they aren't too sweet. With each bite, we remember a little more. We feel more awake, as if being gently nudged to open our eyes and appreciate the person in front of us. Words gush out, reliving and reconstructing our beautiful past. As our volume increases, the lamps shine more brightly, and the glow that just illuminated the top of your head grows to envelop your entire face in an ethereal shimmer. It's as if we just met for the first time, like one of those cinematic meet-cutes where time stands still and your love interest glimmers like magic. Maybe we've just become a vignette for the next customer.

The Infinity Cafe really isn't a place to eat at all. There's no dedicated menu that boasts its daily specials and creative concoctions. Rather, it's the spot for second chances—the possibility of refalling in love over a cup of unremarkable coffee we hardly drink.

Maybe we accidentally bump into each other and spill those coffees over your new, white polo shirt.

Perhaps you tap my shoulder to ask for my suggestion on which cookie you should try.

Maybe we don't even see each other the first time. It may take 40 more visits before we begin to expect each other's presence.

No matter how we meet again, each encounter is the first chapter to a new romance novel that is written entirely by us.

Regrets wash away with the sound of pattering rain—the rain we once ran from but now admire for its musicality. Their alluring symphonies amplify in volume until the world falls completely silent. The droplets present new *what ifs* and hang frozen in the air, like crystals hanging from a chandelier. Orbs of pure energy build up—the room begins to tremble and strings of raindrops sway madly. Suddenly, they burst into stardust and the cafe's walls collapse like silk curtains, like a grand reveal to a secret that lies behind. As the rest of the room topples down, our sofa remains grounded and the table stays put.

Instead of reentering The Park for Hopeless Romantics, like we expect, we discover that the cafe is within a world of its own, one that exists in the middle of nowhere, where the only thing that surrounds it is an inky sky dotted with constellations. We are hovering in space, as memories of our day at the park feel like they're stranded realities away. We begin to spin slowly, gathering a 360 view of the cosmos. We realize the Infinity Cafe wears its name not for its countless vignettes of lovestruck couples, but for the endless night it blossoms into. Upon closer inspection, we notice that the stars are actually luminescent heart-shaped balloons. We reach out for the same one and clasp our hands around the glistening string. On cue, the night sky begins to melt away, and before we know it, we reemerge into a hot summer afternoon that smells freshly of rain. We're standing at the exit sign of the park—the sofa and table vanished underneath our noses, and the starry balloon is replaced with a crimson balloon that has a metallic sheen.

We begin to wonder if this was all a wild dream, one that we would try to write down but forget the details when we thought too deeply.

A silky voice comes over an invisible intercom,

***“Thank you for coming to The Park for Hopeless Romantics. We hope you enjoyed your time here and found love along the way. Don't worry—the fun never ends. The park will return whenever you want to relive your love story through whimsical***

*rides and enchanting attractions. For now, we've reached the last stop—or the first, depending on how you look at it. Now, you face blank pages that are hungry for a new story. We can't wait for future visitors to embark on your romantic quest. Keep dreaming, or open your eyes to enter a new one. We'll see you soon."*

